



# News from White Haven

Ulysses S. Grant National Historic Site educates the American people regarding the lives and legacies of Civil War General and 18th President Ulysses S. Grant, his wife, Julia Dent Grant, the enslaved African Americans and other residents of White Haven.

News from White Haven is a quarterly publication of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. It is also available online by visiting [www.nps.gov/ulsg/](http://www.nps.gov/ulsg/).

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## StoryCorps Records Oral History



***Mia Warren of StoryCorps prepares to record interviews with long-time park volunteers Kay Thurman (left) and Ida Boehlow (right).***

The friendly folks of StoryCorps visited Ulysses S. Grant NHS! StoryCorps is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to provide people of all backgrounds and beliefs with the opportunity to record, share and preserve the stories of our lives. Since 2003, nearly one hundred thousand people have recorded their stories with StoryCorps; it is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind. Several million people listen to StoryCorps' weekly broadcast on NPR's *Morning Edition*. In partnership with StoryCorps, the Midwest Region of the

National Park Service is celebrating the NPS Centennial by sharing and recording park memories at parks throughout the Midwest Region. At Ulysses S. Grant NHS, park staff and several long-time park volunteers were interviewed and recorded telling stories of their experiences at the park. These interviews have created a valuable archive of the park's history. These first-hand stories will also contribute to the National Park Service's centennial goal to connect with and create the next generation of park visitors, supporters and advocates.

## American Ride Comes to White Haven

Stan Ellsworth rode up to Ulysses S. Grant NHS on his Harley-Davidson motorcycle along with a film crew from the cable television show *American Ride*. Now filming for their tenth season on BYUtv, Stan and his crew crisscross the country exploring America's history and learning more about American culture and people. This season Stan, a former high school history teacher, is concentrating on the Presidents from John Quincy Adams to Ulysses S. Grant. Check your local cable tv



***Stan Ellsworth with Ranger Bob.***

provider for BYUtv, and you can watch previous episodes of *American Ride* at: [www.byutv.org/shows](http://www.byutv.org/shows)

# Civil War to Civil Rights: General Grant's Table



**James Meredith entering Ole Miss in 1962.**

In January of 1961, James Meredith applied to the all-white state university, popularly known as *Ole Miss*. His inevitable rejection led to a lawsuit that eventually reached the U. S. Supreme Court. In September, 1962, an Alabamian, Justice Hugo Black, handed down a ruling that Meredith must be admitted. Mississippi Governor Ross Barnett responded on statewide television, "We will not surrender to the evil and illegal forces of tyranny."

The Governor's response to the Court's ruling drew battle lines between the federal government, the Governor, and the forces of white supremacy and segregation in Mississippi. Attorney General Robert Kennedy began a series of phone conversations with the Governor that delved into the relationship of the state to the federal government. At one point Kennedy pointedly said: "Governor, you are a part of the United States," to which Barnett replied, "We have been a part of the United States but I don't know whether we are or not." Kennedy asked, "Are you getting out of the Union?" Unable to persuade the Governor that the Department of Justice intended to enforce the Court's orders, Robert Kennedy eventually had to involve his brother, President John Kennedy.



**President John F. Kennedy and his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy.**

In the meantime, truckloads of white supremacists were coming into Oxford to stop Meredith from entering the University. The Kennedy administration began to worry that a few federal marshals would not be sufficient to protect Meredith. The last thing the Kennedys wanted to do was send in troops, but even phone conversations between the President himself and the Governor did not bring about the desired results. In his 1978 book, *Robert Kennedy and His Times*, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. wrote:

*At midnight Norbert Schlei of the Office of Legal Counsel came to the White House with a proclamation ordering persons obstructing justice in Mississippi to cease and disperse and an executive order federalizing the Mississippi State Guard. Kennedy took Schlei into a small study on an upper floor, sat down at a table and read the documents. After a moment he asked, "Is this pretty much what Ike signed in 1957 with the Little Rock thing?" Schlei pointed to a few refinements. Kennedy signed, snapped off the light and headed into the hall. Then he paused and rapped the table with his hand. "You know," he said, "that's General Grant's table." They said good night. As Schlei went down the stairs to tell waiting reporters what had happened, Kennedy suddenly sprinted to the top of the balustrade and called down to him, "Don't tell them about General Grant's table."*



**President Obama sits at Grant's table, a portrait of Grant above.**

The President may not have wanted to exacerbate the stand-off by mentioning General Grant, but the situation in Oxford grew considerably worse, without his full knowledge. Meredith and the federal officials and marshals charged with protecting him and ensuring his registration to the University found themselves holed up in the Lyceum, under siege by an angry armed mob after the state police were withdrawn. The federal marshals fired tear gas in response to thrown bricks and bottles and gunfire. Despite reports of deaths, and injuries to themselves, they were under strict orders not to shoot except to protect Meredith's life. The President was reluctantly asked to send in the Army, but the Army took five hours to arrive. It was a wildly harrowing night for the federal officials in Oxford and for Robert Kennedy, who felt personally responsible for the Army's delay.

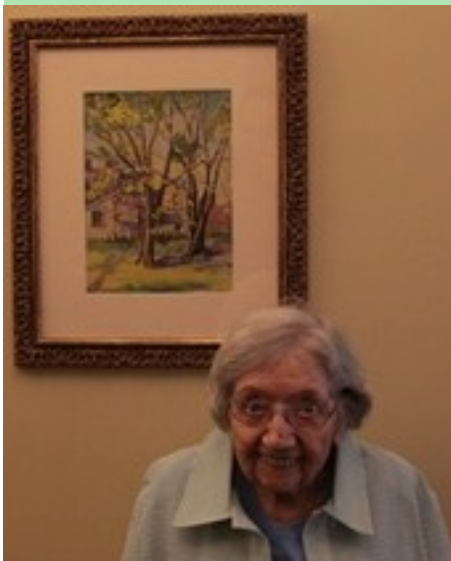
Despite the violent resistance, Meredith was enrolled, and eventually graduated.

Through the decades, many Presidents have used General Grant's table to sign important documents. To learn more about it check out the White House Museum's website at: <http://www.whitehousemuseum.org/furnishings/treaty-table.htm>



## Spotlight on the Park: White Haven Painting

A watercolor painting of historic White Haven has been generously donated to the park by Pat Diener, a local resident who grew up in the St. Louis area. During her childhood, Pat attended Sunday school at the First Church of Christ, Scientist, on N. Kingshighway. When Pat graduated from 8th grade her Sunday school teacher, Nathalie Yehling, gave her this painting as a graduation gift. Nathalie painted this watercolor of White Haven in 1939.



**Pat Diener with 1939 watercolor.**

Nathalie's painting captures a glimpse of White Haven as it appeared in the early twentieth century. The Paris green color that Ulysses and Julia Grant added to White Haven during their ownership was removed in 1913 when St. Louis real estate agent Albert Wenzlick purchased the home and painted it light gray. Nathalie's painting shows the house with a gray, yellowish color. In 1940 the Wenzlicks painted the house white, the color it remained until the National Park Service restored the Grants' Paris green in the mid-1990s. Nathalie Yehling's watercolor painting is currently on display in the park's Visitor Center.

## Ongoing Staff Changes At The Park



**C. Ross**



**T. Orr**



**A. Jackson**

2015 has brought many changes to the staff of Ulysses S. Grant NHS. Park Guide Chiffontae Ross started at the park as a student hire in 2007, but after graduating from University of Missouri, St. Louis, she opted to leave for private employment. Park Guide Terry Orr retired from federal service at the end of July. Terry began as a volunteer at the park, became a seasonal Park Guide, and then a permanent Park Guide in 2010. Chief of Interpretation Arlene Jackson received a promotion to Colorado National Monument in August. Arlene became Chief of Interpretation at U. S. Grant NHS in 2009, after many years of service at Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. The search for the next Chief of Interpretation is underway. In the meantime, Julie Northrip,

Director of Education at JNEM, and Doug Harding, Park Ranger at JNEM, are filling in temporarily. David Newmann has been awarded a permanent Park Guide position after having graduated from University of Missouri, St. Louis. David started working at the park as a volunteer when he was just 11 years old, and has worked in the maintenance department and as a student Park Guide. The park will also be welcoming another new Park Guide at the end of October. Shawn Williams is coming from Bighorn Canyon National Recreation Area. Shawn has NAI interpretive training and a Master's degree in History. Theresa Nordin has filled the position of Administrative Officer vacated by Kevin Weber. Theresa also came from JNEM.

## Kids' Corner: 4th Graders Get Free Passes

Hey Kids! The National Park Service will be celebrating its 100th birthday in 2016! To help celebrate, President Obama launched a new program called *Every Kid in a Park*. As of September 1, fourth graders nationwide can visit the new *Every Kid in a Park* website to obtain a pass that grants free entry for fourth graders and three accompanying adults (or an entire car for drive-in parks) at more than 2,000 federally-managed sites - including national parks, forests and wildlife refuges. The pass is valid through August 31, 2016. *Every Kid in a Park* is designed to inspire you, the next generation, to discover all that our nation's public lands and waters have to offer, including opportunities to be active, spend time with your friends and family, and discover our nation's heritage.

Fourth graders should log onto the website [www.everykidinapark.gov](http://www.everykidinapark.gov) and complete a fun educational activity in order to obtain and print your pass. You can also trade in your paper pass for an official card at participating federal sites nationwide, including Ulysses S. Grant NHS!



**4th Grader Ethan receiving his pass from Ranger David, Sept. 2!**



**Ulysses S. Grant NHS**  
**7400 Grant Road**  
**St. Louis, MO 63123**  
**(314) 842-1867**

## Upcoming Events

- Oct. 10 — 10am — 6th Annual Grant Lecture/John Y. Simon Day —  
Keynote Speaker, Dr. Ron White
- Oct. 17 — 10am & 1pm — *The Fabric of Friendship: Mary Lincoln and Elizabeth Keckley*
- Oct. 24 — 1pm & 7pm — *Grant and Twain*
- Nov. 7 — 10am — *Brown. Marshall and Warren: A Conversation*
- Dec. 19 — 10am & 1pm — *A Hardscrabble Christmas*

*Reservations are required for these events. Please call the park at 314-842-1867 ext. 230.*

## Did you know?

Ulysses S. Grant NHS is now on Instagram! You may ask, “What is Instagram?” It is a free, fun, and simple way to make and share gorgeous photos from a mobile phone. Now, you can learn more about U.S. Grant via this popular app. Follow us on Instagram to see photos of the park, Grant quotes, and special event information. Share photos of your visit to Ulysses S. Grant NHS using the

hashtags #USGrantNPS or #ULSG, and tag us @USGrantNPS. In anticipation of the National Park Service centennial celebration in 2016, we are taking our online presence to the next level across all three social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter) using the hashtag #FindYourPark. Go check it out, give us a follow, and discover new ways to Find Your Park! [Instagram.com/usgrantnps](https://www.instagram.com/usgrantnps)

